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AMERICAN ART NEWS.

Entered as second-class mail matter, February 5, 1909, at New York Post Office under the Act of March 3, 1879.
Published Weekly from Oct. 15 to June 1 inclusive, Monthly from June 15 to Sept. 15 inclusive.
AMERICAN ART NEWS CO., INC., Publishers.

15-17 East 40th Street.
Tel. 7180 Murray Hill.
JAMES B. TOWNSEND, President and Treasurer,
15-17 East 40th Street.
REGINALD TOWNSEND, Secretary,
15-17 East 40th Street.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.	
YEAR, IN ADVANCE	\$2.00
Canada (postage extra)	.50
Foreign Countries	2.75
Single Copies	.10

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When a change of address is requested, both the new and old address should be given. Two weeks' notice is required for changing an address.

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Advice as to the placing at public or private sale of art work of all kinds, pictures, sculptures, furniture, bibelots, etc., will be given at the office of the AMERICAN ART NEWS, and also counsel as to the value of art works and the obtaining of the best "expert" opinion on the same. For these services a nominal fee will be charged. Persons having art works and desirous of disposing or obtaining an idea of their value will find our service on these lines a saving of time, and, in many instances of unnecessary expense. It is guaranteed that any opinion given will be so given without regard to personal or commercial motives.

BUREAU OF APPRAISAL.

We are so frequently called upon to pass upon the value of art works for collectors and estates, for the purpose of insurance, sale, or, more especially to determine whether prior appraisals made to fix the amount due under the inheritance or death taxes are just and correct ones—and so often find that such former appraisals have been made by persons not qualified by experience or knowledge of art quality or market values, with resultant deception and often overpayments of taxes, etc.—that we suggest to all collectors and executors the advisability of consulting our Bureau of Appraisal either in the first place or for revision of other appraisals. This Bureau is conducted by persons in every way qualified by experience and study of art works for many years, and especially of market values, both here and abroad; our appraisals are made without regard to anything but quality and values, and our charges are moderate—our chief desire being to save our patrons and the public from ignorant, needless and costly appraisal expenditure.

ART SALE RECORDS.

Collectors, dealers and others interested are reminded that the first two numbers of Sales of the Year for 1915, in pamphlet form, are still on sale at the AMERICAN ART NEWS office, 15 East 40 St., at 25 cents each, postage prepaid. No. 1 is devoted to the Brayton Ives Collection of Prints sold at the American Art Galleries April 12-14 and No. 2 to the Blakeslee and Duveen Picture Sales, under the same auspices, at the Plaza Hotel Ball Room, April 21-23 and April 29.

THE PRESS AGENT IN ART.

Whoever it was, connected with the French Museum of Art in New York, who "worked up" public interest through the dailies, led by the Herald in the allegorical mural by Besnard "La Paix," the clou of the exhibition of French pictures organized by the Museum, and to open in the Ritz-Carlton ballroom, with modish appendages tomorrow night—proved himself a press agent, for whom the theatrical managers should bid.

His suggestion that the Besnard picture was lost, because it did not arrive on the French steamer on which it was billed—was eagerly seized upon by the art department of the Herald as a "scoop," and published, with a huge reproduction of the canvas, while the other dailies meekly "lifted," in journalistic parlance, the story for their later editions that morning. Through this press publicity many thousands of people became acquainted with the fact of the near exhibition of the picture and of the French Museum's display, who would presumably otherwise never have noticed either incident.

The "Art News" alone last week, suspecting the presence of the Press Agent in the story, so said, and also suggested that the canvas would arrive by the following French steamer—which it did. The fact that the exhibition, both of the Besnard canvas and other French pictures is to be held for a most worthy cause, the relief of French artists and families suffering from the war's effects—excuses the utilization of press agent methods in the attempt to work up public interest in an art display, but it is to be hoped that such methods will not become customary in this country. There is, or should be, a certain dignity of atmosphere inesting high class art exhibitions, which should make the Press Agent unnecessary. We do not want sensation to be made an appeal for art.

THE OPEN FORUM

Letters for this column must not exceed 500 words in length at the most and should be limited, if possible, to 100 words. As a rule condensation and brevity make for force and effect. There are few subjects that cannot better be treated in 100 than in 500 words. If letters exceed the above allowed limit of 500 words they will be "cut" to that space. Letters must be accompanied with name and address of sender, not necessarily for publication (although a letter signed with one's own name is always stronger than one with a pseudonym) but as an evidence of good faith. We cannot publish anonymous communications.

Wants More "Logothete" Words.

Editor AMERICAN ART NEWS:

Dear Sir: It is worthy of note that scientific writers are each year constructing from the Greek and Latin and incorporating into our own language, a vast volume of new words.

In this they seem to show more linguistic capacity than do the writers on art.

Should not the latter seize more freely upon available and effective words from every source and use them as English words?

This would tend to make our fine language more amply and felicitously expressive in art criticism.

As it is, our dictionary is far more indebted to science than to Art.

Very truly,

Jonas M. Libbey.

New York, Dec. 28, 1915.

AS TO "ATTRIBUTIONS."

Mr. Philip J. Gentner, director of the Worcester Art Museum, has written the following letter from Florence, Italy, to Mr. W. H. Downes of the Boston "Transcript":

"Dear Mr. Downes: I learn from a friend that Dr. Mayer, one of the band of young writers sent to America for purposes of their own by Dr. Bode and the greater German authorities, 'experts,' and art dealers, has just discovered that the Worcester Art Museum possesses a 'Portrait of a Young Nobleman' by Gonzales, though ascribed to Coello. Dr. Mayer's article was published, I am told, in a recent number of Art in America. Unfortunately for this 'find' the Museum, nearly three years ago, rejected the attribution to Coello (given, by the way, by Dr. Bode and Dr. Valentiner) then, nearly two years ago, ascribed it tentatively to Gonzales and finally, in August, 1914, on my return from study and travel in Europe, labelled it so decisively, at first with a card, and then on a metal label.

"Six months ago, several other attributions given by high 'authorities'—not all of whom are German—were likewise changed or modified, simply because I was at last certain that these authorities were, wittingly or unwittingly, mistaken. I hope, however, these changes will not be noted, so that they may prove to be only the prelude of further discoveries. When I return I shall probably alter also the label upon our painting now ascribed to Rocco Marconi. * * *

"Whatever has been accomplished at Worcester is due to our acquisition of the finest works we could afford and to our disregard in great measure of the mere opinions, written or not, of nearly all art critics and art historians who 'authenticate' and procure works for dealers and wealthy private collectors. Their reasons are always listened to gladly, and, if valid, incorporated with all the other evidence we can secure.

"Up to the beginning of this year, I deferred in some cases to the signed opinions of a very few 'experts' of international reputation, even when I was all but certain they were in error. I felt I must accept, as director, what I could not accept as an individual. Henceforth I find it best to gather all possible information from any source whatsoever, and to depend primarily for final judgment, in spite of the fact that no single group of men can know thoroughly every field of art, upon my colleagues and myself. Believe me, there is no other safe rule at present for most American museums. Sincerely yours,

Philip J. Gentner."

OBITUARY.

Arthur Hughes.

One of the last of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood followers, the portrait and genre painter, Arthur Hughes, died a few days ago in London, at the age of 83. He took a silver medal for drawing from the antique while a student at the Royal Academy, and later, as an exhibitor in its galleries, attracted attention with his first contribution "April Love." This he followed, in 1864, with "The Eve of St. Agnes," "The Music Party," "Sunbeam in Church" and "Silver and Gold," in 1865 with "Home from Work" and "The Mower," and in 1866 with "Good Night." In 1870 he began to exhibit his series of subjects, from the legends of King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table, the first being "Sir Galahad." This he followed with "The Lady of Shalott" and "The Burial of the Good Knight." Other works were "Endymion," "The Convent Boat," "The Woodman's Return," "Vanity," "The King's Garden," "Uncertainty," "The Sailing Signal Gun," "Summer Is a Coming In," "The Skipper and His Crew" and "Rest by the Way." "The Convent Boat" was at Phila. in 1876. Mr. Hughes painted little since his 60th year.

Montague Flagg, N. A.

The well-known portrait painter Montague Flagg, who was a member of the Nat'l Academy, died on Dec. 24 at the Hahnemann Hospital, at the age of 70, of pneumonia. Mr. Flagg was the son of Rev. Dr. Jared B. Flagg, formerly rector of Grace Protestant Episcopal Church in Brooklyn and was born in Hartford, Conn. He studied in Paris under Jacques-Louis de la Chevreuse, and later came to this city. In 1909 Mr. Flagg's "Portrait of My Wife" took the Thomas R. Proctor prize at the Academy for the best portrait. He was then an associate of the Academy and the following year was elected a full member. In 1904 his work won him a silver medal at the St. Louis Exposition. He was a member of the former Society of American Artists, having been elected in 1883, and lived at the Gainsborough studios, Central Park, S.

ART BOOK REVIEWS.

Masterpieces of Painting.

By Louise Rogers Jewett. 12 Mo. Richard Badger, Boston, \$1.00 net.

The author, late Professor of Art at Mount Holyoke College, outlines the modest plan which she follows in this book—"to give suggestions which stimulate the sense of true appreciation and deepen the sense of enjoyment in the presence of great pictures." The great pictures considered are works of certain masters of the Italian, Dutch and Spanish schools. The first of the three parts of the book, devoted to "Workmanship," has a quotation from John La Farge anent the great artist's love for "his trade," and deals with early mural painting in fresco, painting in tempera and in oil, noting particularly some fine things by Giotto, Benozzo Gozzoli, Luca Signorelli, Fra Filippo Lippi, Carlo Crivelli and Hugo van der Goes. Cennino Cennini is quoted with some good advice to young painters who urge the old admonition that "art is long," especially bidding youth beware of "those who say that they have learned the art without having been with a master."

Miss Jewett's chapters classed under the title "Enthusiasms," consider Giorgione, Simone Martini, Perugino, Andrea Mantegna, Giovanni Bellini, Masaccio, Botticelli, Michelangelo, Titian, Andrea del Sarto, Rembrandt, Nicholas Maes and Velasquez. A series of Appendices under the title of "Outlines and Notes," give little sketches of the painters, set down chronologically, and a "reading list," a short bibliography dealing with the periods and painters noticed. Miss Jewett's "enthusiasms" are expressed with moderation, with what might be called a distinctly feminine delicacy. Being concerned with none but safely immortalized masters, her temperate conclusions are not likely to stir controversy. There are many books of this class, and they certainly do no harm.

James Britton.

Art and Progress No More.

The little monthly magazine, published in Washington at \$2.50 a year and 25 cents a copy and edited by a Miss Leila Mechlin, and formerly known as Art and Progress, appears with the current January number under the title of "The American Magazine of Art." Editorial announcement is made that "the old title of Art and Progress was never satisfactory (many people have thought it absurd) that in every respect the magazine will remain the same, and that there will be no change in its policy or character."

The current number is well printed and illustrated, contains a long review of the annual Phila. Watercolor Academy show—after the display has closed, and another of the annual Chicago Art Institute display, just about to close. But one should not, of course, look for anything approaching "news" in a monthly art magazine of the kind which is suitable only for perusal in chance leisure hours.

SALES PAST AND TO COME

Rare Books and Fine Bindings.

In a collection of books now on exhibition at the Anderson Galleries, preliminary to the sale on Tuesday and Wednesday after, are five beautiful bindings with miniatures on ivory by Miss Currie of London, which are wonderful examples of the finest work of modern binders. The sale includes first editions of many English and American authors and many great rarities, among them Damhoudere's Pratique, Louvain: 1554; Descamps' Vies des Peintres Flamands, extra-illustrated; Esquemelin's Americaensche Zee-Overtoers, Amsterdam: 1678 and the London edition of 1684, and Las Casas' Narratio Regionum, Francofurti, 1598.

English Autographs.

Part VII of the great collection of autographs made by the late John Boyd Thacher of Albany, is now on exhibition at the Anderson Galleries and will be sold on the after. of Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 10 and 11. This is the final part, and will mark the conclusion of a sale that has extended over two years. With the exception of a Ms. by Hawthorne and a few autograph letters by Americans, this division of the collection is made up exclusively of letters, documents and manuscripts by distinguished authors, soldiers, statesmen and rulers of England and France.

Among the items of superlative interest are unpublished letters by Swift and Wordsworth, an extraordinary four-page letter by Shelley, a pen drawing by Thackeray, and letters and documents by the statesmen of the time of Henry VIII. The Wordsworth letter is autobiographical, giving an account of the formation of his opinions, his methods of work, and corrections in his poems.

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